

IRELAND AND THE EMPIRE

A Speech

BY

NICHOLAS FLOOD DAVIN

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Queen's University at Kingston

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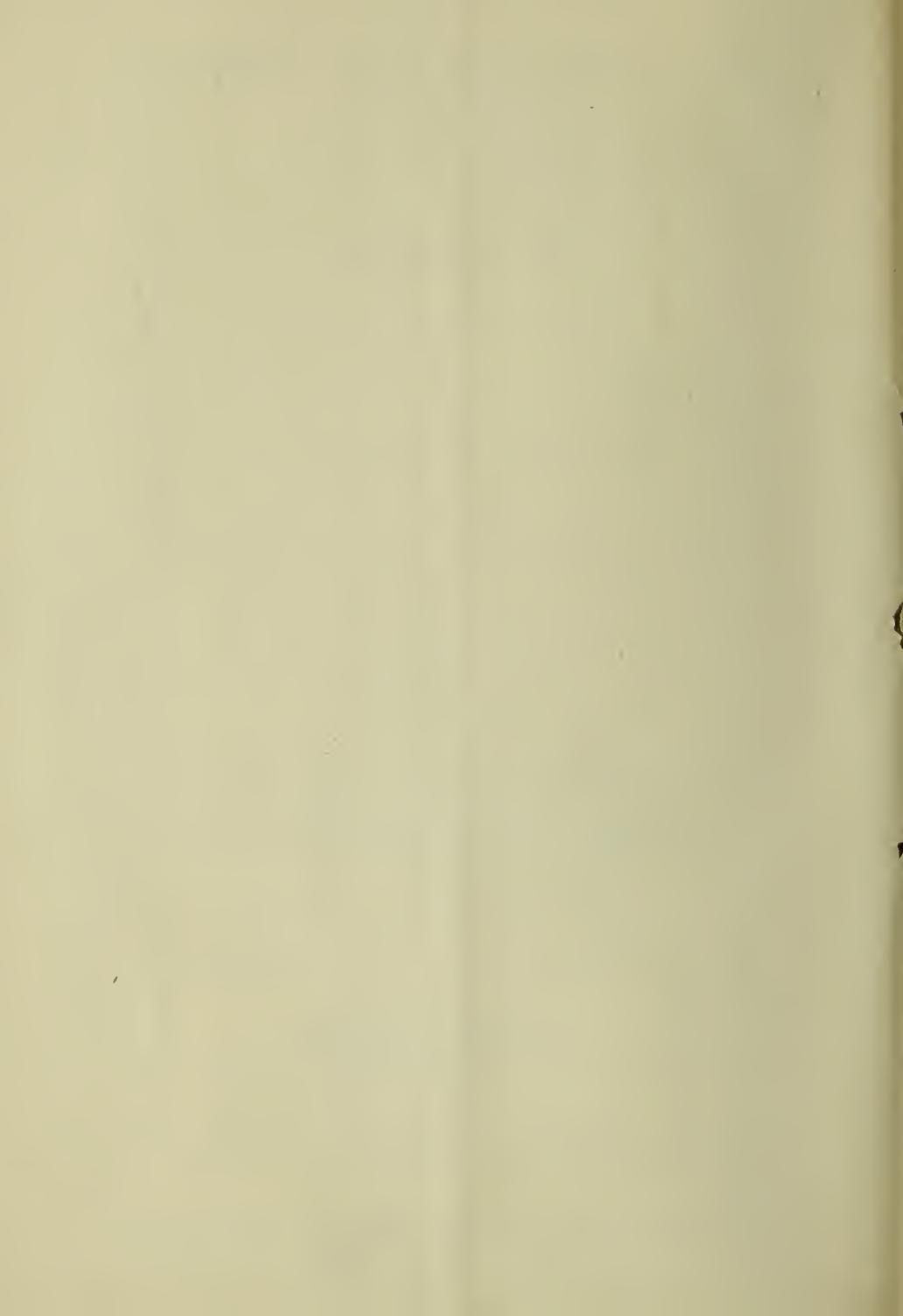
DELIVERED BEFORE THE ST. PATRICK'S SOCIETY, IN NORDHEIMER'S
HALL, MONTREAL, ON ST. PATRICK'S DAY, 1885.

D. BARRY, Esq., THE PRESIDENT, IN THE CHAIR.

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1885



TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD,
G.C.B., &c., &c.,
PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA.

MY DEAR SIR JOHN,—I dedicate this Speech to you as the leading Statesman in Canada, many of whose most distinguishing traits not a few of your supporters have thought eminently Irish. You have in the past been associated with the most able men Ireland has given to Canada, and the great body of your English-speaking supporters are Irish. The Speech is an appeal for true, patriotic action in regard to Ireland and Canada, and as I conclude by calling on my countrymen to build up a united Canada, and as at this hour thousands of men of various origin and different creeds are engaged in vindicating Canadian nationality, moved forward by one thought under the same flag, I think I could not dedicate this Speech to anyone so appropriately as to the Father of Confederation.

I am, my dear Sir John,
Yours truly,
NICHOLAS FLOOD DAVIN.

OTTAWA, April 7th, 1885.

IRELAND AND THE EMPIRE

A SPEECH

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NICHOLAS FLOOD DAVIN.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen :

So pressed am I with private business affairs calling me to New York that almost at any other time, or on any other occasion, much as I have desired to meet an audience, and especially an Irish audience, in Montreal, I should have declined the honour of addressing you. But at a time when revolting crimes, and meaningless as revolting, are connected with the name of Ireland, I felt that nothing should prevent my being present at a meeting of Irishmen on St. Patrick's Day in that city of the Dominion where there is the largest Irish population, to ask you to join with me in protesting against outrages which are as much without meaning as morality, and with which I would fain hope no Irishman, acting as an Irishman and aiming at Irish objects, was ever connected. (Cheers.) As I wrote to your president when he conveyed to me your invitation, I have ever held it a privilege to address an audience of my countrymen, and not only a privilege, but a duty, if for no other reason than this, my views may differ, nay, on certain points, are certain to differ more or less from yours,

and mental progress does not depend on hearing or reading our own ideas, but on hearing ideas different from our own; not on uniformity but variety of thought. The mental glance which sees facts in their true relation, the comparing faculty which co-ordinates these facts and draws from them just and fruitful inferences, the sinewy vigour which can take up great themes and master them, the cold clear head which does not grow intoxicated on the frothing goblets of self-glorying verbiage—these are things which do not come from imitation or egotism disguised under vague raptures respecting the indefinite and unhistorical in the past, or the indefinite and impossible in the future. They are to be had only in that arena where thought grapples with thought, and independent minds try themselves and their conclusions against others.

I have addressed many audiences of my countrymen in Canada calling themselves by various names of national significance. More than once, and this has happened in the present case, on such occasions friends of mine, older men, more experienced in the ways of

the world and in politics have come before hand and have said to me: "Don't go. An Irish Protestant, you will destroy your influence with those who are your natural allies, the strongest body in this Dominion." But I have thought that as an Irishman, even if I be an heretic, I have some share in St. Patrick, some right to wear the shamrock, and on this ground and more especially for reasons already noted and feeling it was a great evil to keep any two classes of the community apart, and particularly Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants, I have turned me from such Achitophel counsels and have said: 'Go speak your honest thought, remembering that the communication of our thoughts, the passing of the sacred fire from soul to soul is that which links us with the Deity and is the fountain whence true progress springs. The men you are called on to address are like yourself, made of the fiery dust of the land of Grattan. If you kneel at different altars, your voices go up to the same universal Father. Amongst them all there will be no single heart that, struck by a loving hand, will not be found to beat true to the music of generous instincts. Throw away calculating prudence. You bear the name of the man who first made Ireland an organized political power, and redeemed Protestants and Catholics alike from humiliation. With whatever message reading observation and reflection may have given you, a son of Ireland, proud of her and concerned for her welfare, go—take counsel with your brethren; speak out your honest convictions. On some points you may not agree with them, nor they with you. But on one point you will be a unit—love to Ireland.' (Loud cheers.)

Other sagacious individuals advised me to avoid important practical subjects, and to give you a literary essay on the patron saints of the three kingdoms. I am not sure that this would be very profitable, as I am not up in hagiology, and I might therefore, in the case of at least two out of the three saints, have had to evolve their characters out of my moral consciousness, or else infer them from the characteristics of their votaries. About St. Andrew I know nothing save what I learn from the meagre account of him in the Gospel. If however there is any relation between patron saints and their votaries I am sure he was of a saving turn, and if he did not run he lived on or near a bank. (Laughter.) A mythical atmosphere envelops St. George, but as we know him he is not a martyr but a conqueror. He is always killing that dragon, and England, whose patron saint he has been since the time of Edward III has gone in quest of somebody or other to fight with from the earliest times. A war steed has been her hobby-horse, and whoever does not get out of her way, she has regarded as a dragon for whom the best thing she could do was to kill him. In the tenderness and generosity for which the Irish people are remarkable, we may perhaps trace the influence of St. Patrick. I am certain there was nothing parsimonious about him, that he was brave, generous to a fault and as the song says, "a gentleman." (Laughter.) I am sure there are points of difference between the patron saints and their votaries. There is, for instance, something mythical about St. George. I need hardly say there is nothing mythical about John Bull. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) He is a fact, and the roast beef which builds up his rotund

figure is not more matter of fact than he. The Hon. Alexander Mackenzie once said that five cent pieces were invented in order to enable Scotchmen to contribute to the poor box. This is of course a joke, for no men are more forward to contribute for good and useful purposes than Scotchmen. But, anyway, I am certain St. Andrew never changed a ten cent piece on Saturday night in order to swell the offerings at church on the following day with a five cent piece. (Laughter.) This is established on several grounds, but one is conclusive: the decimal system of coinage is a comparatively modern invention. (Renewed laughter.) As to St. Patrick, I am convinced he never made love to a pretty girl, and herein he was certainly not typical of an Irishman. (Laughter.) From these hurried hints as to the character of the address on patron saints, I should have made, I think you will agree with me that like the shoemaker, I had better stick to my last and make you a speech.

Generous and courageous spirits have frequently given expression to the noble wish that Ireland might have been plunged for five minutes beneath the Atlantic. The biography of Thomas Carlyle shows from what a petty crater belched out the thunders of his verities and eternities and immensities. It was from this miserable source that the insolent suggestion got literary vogue. It has been echoed in newspapers and at dinner tables by curs and curlings, who knew not the full significance of what they said. If such a plunge could make any great difference in the character of the people ultimately inhabiting that island it would have deprived the Empire of some of the greatest men it has produced in diplo-

macy, in government, in war; she would have lost soldiers such as Wellington and Wolseley, statesmen and rulers such as the Lawrences who saved India, and Dufferin who may save it again. We should have to trace the most brilliant pages of literature, and art, and work of all kinds in a dozen climes to realize what the world would have lost. It is true that at a loss of life greater than many wars would entail, thus much might have been secured that the majority of the inhabitants of Ireland would profess the same religion as England. But this would not have solved, as the history of American Independence shows, the difficulties between England and Ireland, unless English policy had been very different from what it unfortunately was. That policy was not wholly dictated by religious differences, but in great part by trade interests and jealousies. The history of the world and the history of Ireland no less proves that the fact that men profess the same religion will not prevent them quarrelling if their interests clash. English legislation and the petitions of English manufacturers show that there were times when Englishmen wielding influence and power supposed that the interests of the two countries were opposed. This, of course, as I hold, was a mistake. The interests of an English manufacturer and an Irish manufacturer might be diverse, but it was in the interest of the English people at large that linen should be manufactured in Belfast and lace in Limerick; and it is melancholy to think that had the manufacturing resources of Ireland not been unjustly interfered with how few of the difficulties which are connected with the name of Ireland would have ever existed!

Save in rare times of great religious fervour or intense political excitement, ninety-nine per cent. of the motives and influences which mould men's private and public acts are material, and the trade acts were even more the cause of Irish discontent than the penal laws, instinct with the spirit of religious persecution. No one who wishes to come to a wise conclusion on Irish subjects should approach them without questioning history as to the effect of geographical conditions on the destinies of the human race, and the rapidity with which material interests, when undiluted with humiliating ingredients, act as solvents of the most cherished convictions. Archbishop King maintained the divine right of kings until James II. began to persecute him, and the Presbyterians of the north of Ireland supported the penal laws until they were themselves brought under them. It is not from a Catholic country I should have expected the best enunciation of the doctrines of religious liberty, yet, Irish Catholics struggling for Catholic emancipation, led by one of the greatest tribunes the world ever saw, have proclaimed, in the strongest terms, liberty of conscience. I have a very different idea of Ireland—than that it should be the sheep walk, the pig pen or cattle ranche for any country—and you may be sure, if you peopled Ireland with a race of Protestant yeomanry—for in modern days the granting of large estates would have been out of the question—Ireland would, unless her interests were fully attended to, be a much more troublesome sister kingdom than she ever has been with religious rancour, misrepresentation and division dispersing her force. People forgot that it was not Catholics who called the

stricken Ireland into life. Swift, I suppose, was no Catholic. Molyneux was no Catholic. Mr. Flood was no Catholic. Mr. Grattan, who called a nation into formal existence only to see its flame extinguished by the foulest gusts of corruption—he was no Catholic. Parnell to-day, the leader of the Irish party in the House of Commons—he is no Catholic. I make these observations to show the mistaken policy of those who seek to identify Ireland with one form of the Christian faith. From the Catholics of Ireland we have got great men and striking characters and brilliant writers and thinkers. Time would fail me to mention the O'Connells, the Sheils, and in our own day the Justin McCarthys and Butlers. Religion unfortunately does divide, but not half so much as diversity of interest, and had the same course been pursued towards a Protestant Ireland as was pursued towards a partly Catholic and partly Protestant Ireland, instead of having two mastiffs to deal with which might be turned against each other, you would have had to deal with a united Ireland which with its full force would spring a lion at your throat. (Cheers.)

But, sir, Ireland, the Ireland of Protestant and Catholic, divided and distracted as it has been, has been described by my friend Mrs. Mulock, the sister of Agnes Strickland, as a land in which genius is indigenous, and by John Stuart Mill, as inhabited by a race more like the ancient Greek race than any race of modern time, and such a race with its pure and therefore prolific women, can only be, as it has surely been, a blessing to mankind. (Cheers.) If it did nothing but show what a race can endure and yet live and spring into vigorous existence its lesson would not

be lost on the world. I will not go back to the obligation Ireland laid Europe and the world under in the 7th and 8th centuries, when, as Mr. Goldwin Smith testifies she was the lamp of learning and religion for Christendom. Their scholarship was, indeed, illustrious. Eric of Auxerre writes to Charles the Bold:—“What shall I say of Ireland which despising the dangers of the deep is migrating with her whole train of philosophers to our coast?” Pupils from all quarters flocked to Ireland. Thousands of students came for instruction to the schools of Armagh, and to “that melancholy plain where the Shannon flows by the lonely ruins of Clonmacnoise.” Charlemagne welcomed Irish scholars and Irish preachers as powerful allies in the civilizing work he had to do. Mr. Goldwin Smith says: “During the seventh and eighth centuries, and part of the ninth, Ireland played a really great part in European history. It was the bright morning of a dark day.” The Danish invasions destroyed this ripening glory. Passing over the page of Irish history without once alighting I come to modern times, and what do I find? Whether I enter the Museum at Oxford or at old Trinity I am in the presence of carvings wrought by Irish hands which rival the works of Jean Goujon. When you enter St. Stephen’s Hall in Westminster Palace, you see on either side marble statues of illustrious men. You must, be you the most virulent vituperater of Ireland, do justice to Irish genius, not merely because Burke is before you as he arraigned Warren Hastings at the bar of outraged humanity, and Grattan emphasizing with outstretched hand the eternal principles of justice. Hampden, the love of liberty on his brow, strength and balance in

every line of the figure and every trait of the countenance is there; so is Selden. You look for the sculptor’s name. What is it? Foley. You cross a quarter of the globe and enter Calcutta. You are struck with wonder by the bronze group, “Lord Hardinge and Charger.” You look for the sculptor’s name. What is it? Foley. I visited Washington in 1879. Nothing I saw there is so impressed on my memory as the works adorning the Capitol. Who were the sculptors? Two Irishmen—McDowell and Crawford. Let us return to Westminster Palace. Let us look at those wonderful frescoes. They are, of course, by English hands. Not a bit of it. They are the work of Irishmen—the greatest of them a fellow-townsman of my own. I have said nothing respecting their achievements in the world of literature about which I know a little, very little, I am sorry to say. Matthew Arnold, the greatest of English critics, tells us that all the charm, the magic, in English literature is drawn from a Celtic source. Let us glance a moment at a work whose effect on modern English literature is incalculable—I mean the *Spectator* of the 18th century. Who conceived it? An Irishman—poor honest, wine-loving Dick Steele. Who founded the Scottish philosophy? An Irishman—Francis Hutcheson. I do not stop to point to cases of individual success. I am dealing with founders and leaders. Who is the founder of the novel of character at whose feet sat Thackeray, Dickens and Carlyle? An Irishman—Laurence Sterne. Who is the father of the war correspondent? An Irishman—William Howard Russell. What is the greatest poetic work of modern times? Tennyson’s “Idylls of the King.” These are Celtic, in

the main Irish, poems—plot, character, dream. We have of course the laureat's treatment, but the poems were there before him. I can only give you a vista into the forest of artistic and literary wealth Irishmen have gifted the world with. I want your imaginations to explore, to generalize, for I must hurry on. Take their population and advantages—their advantages! Good God! their advantages! Take their disadvantages into account and you will say they stand shoulder to shoulder with the greatest peoples of the world (Cheers.) I have said nothing about their success in a hundred other fields than those indicated. But, cries the critic: "Granted! We could acknowledge their genius and forgive them the splendid services they have rendered mankind if they would not prate about and persist in loving Ireland. But the brutes will not turn their back on their mother." Yes, that is it; they will not forget Ireland, the land of their birth. (Cheers.) I am not sure I should have been a success as a saint. Canonization is one of the few luxuries my family never enjoyed. But I have one thing in common with St. Patrick—I should enjoy putting my heel on such snakes. (Renewed cheers.)

And now what country do you think lies under greatest obligations to Ireland? America, as has been again and again acknowledged by great Americans, is under great obligations to Ireland. Canada is under great obligations to Ireland. France is under great obligations to Ireland. We gave her armies as brave as ever fought under her heroic flag. We gave her heroes as stainless and as brave as her own Bayard. But not one of them or all owe so much to Ireland as England—as the British Empire. She has been

the great liberalizer of the Empire. (Hear, hear.) As Mr. Hallam points out, the jealousy of England was roused at an early period by the competition of her own colonists and Ireland's struggles against the trade laws choking her manufactures—for bad as were the penal laws, properly so called, the trade laws were worse—gave the world a period, fruitful not merely of splendid eloquence and ardent patriotism, but of sound principles. Travel back a little over one hundred years and what was the condition of the English people? Were they enfranchised? They were like the Irish people under the heel of an oppressive and insolent oligarchy. Grattan's great triumph was doomed to an early death, but he and Flood and Burke, and a dozen other Irishmen had sent principles abroad, which ultimately led to the Reform Bill of 1832, and to that of 1867. Within the bounds of the British Empire Ireland has been the foremost assertor of popular rights, and my sneering friend who would sneer at Ireland to-day and go and vote, if you can vote, you owe it to her. Ireland's sufferings have given the world a clearer grasp of civil and religious liberty. Catholic emancipation and the struggle leading thereto had an incalculable influence on the progress of mankind. To-day we see the Scotch crofters calling for tenant right, and the Irish land bills point to similar measures for the most sodden and miserable peasantry in the world—that of England. The fall of the Irish State Church rang the death knell of the establishment in England. To Ireland is due the pregnant aphorism—property has its duties as well as its rights—which points to the sweeping away of more abuses than mere absentees.

Ireland's mission for the world is not yet accomplished. Her voice will yet pull down abuses, which are the vast lingering heritages of feudalism held in their places by ligatures of mistaken sentiment. In going through an Alpine valley you will sometimes see a huge bulk of ice which could tear a forest down if it fell. Those acquainted with the country will tell you that a young girl wandering through the valley, and in the gaiety of her heart singing, will sometimes by the mere vibration of her voice cause that mass to descend. The voice of suffering Ireland in the past has destroyed time-honoured abuses, and there can be little doubt that many things which seem established in England to-day, as though they could never be moved, will by the mere vibrations from by-gone Irish struggles be precipitated from their pride of place. (Cheers.)

I took you back a little over a hundred years. At that time who could realize the immense Ireland there would be outside the bounds of Erin? Canada presented then, even to the imagination of the poet, only the idea of a dreary waste. Go back earlier and you find every power that could be used against a people, used against the Irish people. The land was, time and again, ploughed and harrowed by war. Laws which might have subdued a race of Titans into tame pigeons had been put in operation. Then came the alternate blandishments and threats of power, organized and wholesale misrepresentation. Kings and heroic armies have fought against her, but like some little pinnace against which whole seas rise up in vain, she still rides the waves, and I believe it is in the interest of the world that she should preserve her distinct and marked individuality. I do not think our

social and moral wealth, not to speak of the picturesqueness of life, would be enhanced if the Irishman were to disappear. (Cheers.)

Have you considered the age of the British Empire as an Empire? Have you ever asked yourselves who built it up? I remember reading an unpublished poem of D'Arcy McGee in which, on seeing the Union Jack flying across the Niagara River, he apostrophized it as the "felon flag of England." He afterwards became very loyal to that flag and was indeed forward to make proposals and sketch schemes for the future of Canada which breathed a belief in the monarchical principle with which I could not sympathize. I have heard even Lord Salisbury say that if people were commencing afresh they would not go and establish a House of Lords and imitate in act of construction the British Constitution, which was a growth. But what is the Union Jack? What is the British standard? As a fact the British ensign is in part an Irish ensign, and contains the blended crosses of St. Patrick, St. Andrew and St. George. The Royal Standard in the same way contains the insignia of England, Scotland and Ireland. It was hoisted on the tower on Jan. 1st, 1801, and since that period the British Government has done nothing which could by the boldest poetic license be described as a felony. When the crown of Scotland was united to that of England King James issued a proclamation that "all subjects of this isle and the Kingdom of Great Britain should bear in the main top the red cross, commonly called St. George's Cross, and the white cross, commonly called St. Andrew's cross, joined together according to the form made by our own

heralds." This was the first Union Jack. In 1801 a new Union Jack was prepared, and in my opinion, seeing that the crowns were united, it might have been prepared before. But to return. What is the age of the British Empire? It did not exist in the days of Elizabeth. Then you had England in her youth, after intestine feuds and civil wars, growing into maturity, and she gave the world Shakespeare and his contemporaries. It is about this period—the period of the reformation—that the English Government acts towards Ireland in such a manner as leaves with peoples memories of resentment. Henry II went to Ireland on the invitation of one of her princes. He was not an Englishman. On the contrary, he belonged to a family which had dealt out dire oppression to Englishmen, and here let me say, respecting this and succeeding periods, there is no ground for the Irish people or for any Irishman whatever his opinions, hating the English people, as a people. (Cheers). The English people had no power in the time of the Tudors. England was governed by an oligarchy up to 1832 and the reform bill of that day enfranchised only the "middle class." Not until 1867 could it be said the English people had power. All peoples should love each other. (Cheers). If Irishmen have any quarrel with England on the field of history it is not with the people, who love justice, but with a class who oppressed the English people themselves. (Renewed cheers). The first invaders of Ireland were not English or Norman, but Danes. The Danes never could have obtained a footing in Ireland only that they found the island torn and divided by petty wars between petty chiefs—the "kings" into whose bowels run the roots of so many

family trees, my own amongst the number. A country in the condition Ireland was in at the period of the battle of Clontarf was at the mercy of any united people which should choose to attack it. When Maelmurra, stung by a sharp word over a game of chess, roused his whole clan against Brian, the O'Rourkes, the O'Neils, the O'Flahertys and the Kearys promised to assist him, and the result was wholesale destruction of property as well as loss of life. O'Neil ravaged Meath. O'Rourke attacked Malachy and slew his grandson and heir, but Malachy soon defeated his assailants, and of course proceeds to plunder Leinster. Malachy calls on Brian for protection, who "ravaged Ossory," and marched on Dublin where he was joined by his son Murrogh "who had devastated Wicklow, burning, destroying and carrying off captives until he reached Kilmainham." Gormflaith, a much married lady of great personal attractions and force of character, collects forces against her two husbands, Brian and Malachy. She sent her son Sitric to bring foreign aid and promised her hand and the Kingdom of Ireland to each of two vikings if they would come and help the Danes. Brian on his way to Dublin "plundered and destroyed as usual," says the Nun of Kenmare. A third of the forces on the Danish side were Leinster men—Irishmen—under Maelmurra. After the victory of Clontarf dissensions arose, and on their way from the battlefield the victorious clans separated and drew up in order of battle! O, my countrymen, what is the lesson? What is the lesson? Have you more capacity for union, more capacity for self-suppression to-day than you had then? When the Normans arrived, the annals of the Four Masters

tell us they were not regarded as dangerous—the Irish chiefs “set nothing by the Flemings.” It seemed apparently to them in the ordinary course of things that foreign troops should be brought into the country to reinstate a petty prince. Disunited and selfish chieftains were easily brought to submit to the Norman, and thenceforward the history of Ireland is the history of a half subdued dependency in which the miseries of rebellion are aggravated by domestic broils. The Normans thoroughly conquered England. They only half conquered Ireland. But their tyranny in each country was equally systematic and cruel. We find in Henry VIII’s day France interfering in Ireland, but like subsequent intermeddlings this interference amounted to nothing. When O’Neil revolted in 1597 and defeated the English at Blackwater he invited the Spaniards to come to the country. The fact that whenever there was a revolt against England foreign aid was sought, what does it mean? Would Ireland dependent on Spain have been a happier country than she has been? The government of Ireland to a period within living memory was characterized by want of statesmanship, tyranny, greed. But, I repeat, for all this the English people themselves were in no way responsible. And now once more I ask who built up the British Empire as we see it to-day? It is little more than two hundred years since the English East India Company retired from the Eastern seas to the continent of India. Not until 1718 was the knell of Dutch supremacy in the East rung, when Clive attacked the Dutch at Chinsurah. But it was during the great French war, from 1781 to 1811, that England wrested

from Holland nearly every one of her colonies, and our Indian Empire became a great imperial fact, where we rule 240,000,000, exactly double what Gibbon reckoned as ruled by imperial Rome. Now, what soldiers during the great French war, what soldiers since have been among the bravest and most effective in the British army? You know what work Irishmen have done in every field of activity since then. In America during the eighteenth century Irishmen were found on all sides. To-day there are millions of Irishmen in England and Scotland, and hundreds of thousands bearing English names whose blood is in part Irish. In Australia and Canada and India they have played their part and played it well. Whoever brought about Confederation—it was an Irishman—Guy Carleton, the founder and saviour of Canada—who first conceived the idea. There is the fabric of the British Empire. It is a stately structure. It affords room for genius and activity of every kind; opens up careers for all. Well, there is not a stone in it on which there is not the mark of an Irish chisel. (Cheers.) Irishmen have as much right to claim part ownership in it as anybody else. It is a Hiberno-British Empire. (Cheers.) They have as good a right to enter its best rooms as anybody else. Mind, I am only showing you your right. I am not giving you any advice. But if I did do this I would say to you “Never abandon Ireland, your country; so long as there is one thing she ought to have—if you live in Ireland—struggle for it; if you live here give that struggle your moral support; but do not deprive yourselves and your sons of your birthright; for there is no man, call he himself English or Scotch, who has a

better right to walk into the best room in that building than you." The Irish race has, as we have seen, expanded beyond the bounds of Ireland. Its fecund off-shoots are found in all parts of the world. Irishmen, as I have before stated, are found in large numbers in all the great cities of England and Scotland. I have just come from our Pacific coast, and in San Francisco the leading millionaires are Irish. As I showed in a book published some years ago, they are after the French-Canadians the most numerous here. In the States they form a powerful factor in the formation of the American race. In the Indian Civil Service examinations the graduates of the Irish universities have distanced all competitors for the Civil Service in India. India—which an Irish Governor-General saved for the Empire—is full of them. They are found in tens of thousands in Australia where, as in Canada, Irishmen have held the highest positions. How are you going to crowd the tens of millions into Ireland if you make Ireland independent? And look at the position of an Irishman in the British Empire. He is born a citizen of that Empire. There is no position in it to which he cannot aspire. He has helped to build it up. Remove the last vestige of wrong which may throw its shadow on Ireland; but do not go and make yourselves aliens where you are sons of the house and can aspire to rule. (Cheers.)

And now, sir, let me point to the greatest duel of modern times — a duel between a constitutional country ever progressing to greater freedom and a despotism and a despot; between a cause which had on it the dawning light of a liberty that is resplendent to-day in Canada and a dark cause whose baleful wings flung the blackness of the

shadow of death over Europe. In that duel Irishmen played a great part. Let me read to you some remarks of Mr. Grattan made in one of his noblest speeches, that delivered on the escape of Napoleon from Elba. He paints the ruin which would be brought on Europe by Bonaparte's success—by the confirmation of a military tyranny in the heart of Europe—"a tyranny founded on the triumph of the army over the principles of Civil Government tending to universalise the domination of the sword—to reduce to paper and parchment Magna Charta, and all our civil institutions." Well, sir, the last struggle was at Waterloo. In the earlier fights in the Peninsula the Irishman was where he always is, when there is danger, in the front. The victory at Waterloo was not the victory of England and Ireland and Scotland and Prussia merely; it was the victory of modern civilization. Hear the language of Grattan speaking of the Napoleonic regime:—"An experiment such as no country ever made, and no good country would permit, to relax the moral and religious influences—to set heaven and earth adrift from one another—make God Almighty a tolerated alien in his own creation—an insurrectionary hope to every bad man in the community, and a frightful lesson of profit and power vested in those who have pandered their allegiances from king to emperor, and now found their pretensions to domination on the merit of breaking their oaths and deposing their sovereigns." Sir, we are proud of the charge of the Irish brigade at Fontenoy, because it illustrates our traditional valour, though it was in a foreign service and for a despotic king. May we not be at least equally proud of that charge at Waterloo made by Irish-

men in the interest of freedom, of humanity, of progress, of all the blessings we enjoy to-day in Canada, that charge, before whose fiery onset broke those veteran legions of the Apollyon of Europe, legions trained under the eye of him who stands all but peerless in his genius for war, legions which never reeled in the shock of war before? (Loud and prolonged cheers.)

Did not Irish blood flow freely during the Crimean war? Is there an Indian battle-field which has not been stained with Irish blood? To-day what do we see in the Soudan? Irish soldiers fighting with their native bravery. The Commander-in-Chief is an Irishman; seven of the eleven officers killed at Abou Klea were Irishmen; Stewart was an Irishman; Eyre and Coveney were Irishmen. Nor is it only by officers that the Kingdom of Ireland is represented. An Irish regiment won Lord Wolseley's prize for the shortest time on record up the Nile. Are people going to make themselves aliens in an Empire for which they are pouring out their blood, and which they have built up, and which, therefore, is in part an Irish Empire? Is it not madness to throw away your birthright purchased by so great a price? The Empire is really a Brito-Hibernian Empire. (Cheers.) But what is the word Britain itself? Herodotus, the earliest writer who mentions the British Isles by name, says that beyond the pillars of Hercules there are "two very large islands called British, Albion and Ierne, lying beyond the Keltoi." The word Britannia, to denote the larger island, is first found in Caesar. It was applied to England at a time when no Saxon had set foot on it, when it was inhabited by Celts, and is, therefore, a name no Irishman, even if animated by unhistorical and

misguided hatred of Saxons, need object to use as his own. Again I say I am not asking you to turn your back on your country. I despise and detest the national bastard who could do this. (Cheers.) And, alas! there have been such. When I was travelling in the States Americans frequently spoke to me as if I was an Englishman. I always told them, "I have lived a good deal in England, but I am an Irishman." "Oh!" they would say, "I like to see a man not ashamed of his country," a remark which was conclusive to me that they had met with men so base; and in fact I have met with them myself—men who would deserve immortal scorn if they were not beneath a moment's contempt. (Loud cheers.)

And now let me turn to a subject which every Irishman should deal with, and especially on a day like this. If there is one thing for which Irishmen are eminent throughout the world it is for their kind-heartedness. Thackeray said no Irishman ever gave an alms without a word which was better than the gift. Mr. Mahatty, quoting lines from a Greek poet painting the miserable condition of an orphan in ancient Greece, how he was spurned, points with pride to the kindness with which old friends and neighbours care for the orphan in Ireland. It was an Irishman — long before Wilberforce was born—who first broke a lance against slavery. Go to any great public library and who will you find expounding most eloquently the principles of civil and religious liberty? You have only to recall the massive thought and pregnant sentences of Burke, the burning words of Curran. In many an immortal page traced by an Irish hand you are brought face to face

with a large humanity, full of tenderness for the helpless; with justice who raises her awful sword to guard the innocent life, and with that mercy which droppeth as the dew from heaven and whose quality is not strained. The ideas produced by a people when they are wise and fruitful of good are their most precious heritage. An Irishman, Mr. Sterne, touches us by painting the captive starling; he gets to the fountain of tears when he describes my Uncle Toby's sorrow for poor Letevre. He swore by the Eternal the poor officer, sick and far from home, and anxious about his child, should not die. Pity must be the same in all natures, divine and human; and Sterne finely says: "The accusing spirit who flew up to heaven's Chancery with the oath blushed as he gave it in, and the recording angel dropped a tear upon the word and blotted it out forever." We all remember how the poet Moore pleads for the poor child of the blacking brigade. But I forget. Whose day is it we are celebrating? We are celebrating the day of a saint renowned for his kindness of heart—his pity for the unenlightened, his succour of the poor, his broad humanity, his Christian love. The saint of England, Saint George, appears spear in hand dealing death, no doubt to an obnoxious foe; the saint of Ireland is seen explaining the Trinity by the shamrock, touching the heart of rude chieftains by his tender eloquence, pleading the cause of the captive and the condemned. With such traditions of kindness and bravery, with such a national Saint, good God! sir, in what dream of madness can men connect the idea of Irishmen with ministers of stealthy death and death to the innocent? It is a long fall says the hero of Tennyson's great poem the "North-

ern Cobbler" after he recalls on the morning of a debauch how he had kicked his wife over night, and then the contrasting picture of his courting her in the summer field—the lark singing to break his heart up in the sunny clouds; but he did not see the lark; he was looking into his sweetheart's eyes, and then came the first kiss—"Heer wur a fall fro' a kiss to a kick." Sir, it is a long fall from our national apostle to the apostle of dynamite. Who dares to connect the name of any Irishman not shunned and spurned of men with the demons of dynamite? I say with a few men advertising themselves and professing to act in the cause of Ireland with dynamite it is the duty of Irishmen, especially when they assemble on a national day like this, to utterly denounce such tactics and renounce all share in such shameless wrong. What do the craven hucksters of dynamite make war on? On buildings and the innocent lives within, and when the shock comes, where are they? They have left some clock-work machinery to run the danger—if I may make a bull—and they are safe and far away. (Hear! hear! and cheers.) Grattan in his early days used to practice speaking in the moonlight in Windsor Forest. In one of these moonlight walks, while in his grotesque way apostrophising an empty gibbet, a wag tapped him on the shoulder with, "Pray, sir, how did you manage to get down?" The joke was a good one. Irishmen have as much to do with dynamitards as Grattan with the gibbet. (Cheers.)

Nothing can be more delusive than the opinions which prevail regarding Ireland and Irishmen. The popular idea on this continent and elsewhere is that the country is a witch's cauldron—a scene of com-

motion and danger and bloodshed. At this hour you could go through the length and breadth of Ireland without seeing a sign of such disorders. In the same way the action of certain employers in England in dismissing Irishmen shows a complete misunderstanding of their character and the extent to which the dynamite business has spread. But this makes it all the more incumbent on every Irishman at this hour to denounce men who are trying for the sake of personal gain to inaugurate a solvent of civil life. I have noticed that the action of one or two individuals, all for their own interest, becomes the signal for the bark against Irishmen to be heard on every side, and the Irish name, which is a focus of glory in every field of art and knowledge is dragged in the gutter. With as much authority as any prophet could utter it; in the name of Christianity, whose teachings they outrage; in the name of humanity, whose instincts they abhor; in the name of Ireland, which they betray and bes foul, I say, "Woe to the Apostles of Dynamite," and to you, "Stand aside from such men and be ye separate." (Loud cheers.)

And now, sir, in conclusion, let me say that the first duty of every man living in Canada is to Canada. Whether you agree or not with a man who, born in a country, thinks it his duty to resist its government—provided his methods are just and are consistent with humanity and honour—you cannot despise him, for he takes his life and his liberty in his hands. But to come to a country like Canada — voluntarily choosing it as one's home — and then under the shelter of its hospitality and away from danger to disturb its peace is an act of unparalleled baseness. Canada is a free country, that is

enough. But if additional considerations are necessary to make Irishmen abhor such tactics, let it be remembered that when the United States shut its doors on the fever-stricken and half-starved Irish peasants of the famine years Canada opened her arms to them. In Canada Irishmen are the most numerous of the English speaking races. In Canada Irishmen have made themselves names and careers and happy homes. To menace the peace of such a country — no, not the peace — some public buildings and a few innocent lives, is more like something that would emanate from Bedlam than anything else. Such an act has no meaning in it, unless it be as a ruffianly advertisement. It could accomplish nothing good. It could only reflect the lurid light of criminality on whoever sympathized with it. It is not sane unless it be as the ruse of scoundrels. It is without the pale of humanity. (Enthusiastic cheers.)

On Saturday night I attended a banquet at which your eloquent friend, Mr. Curran, was present. He showed what he had shown in Parliament, that the process of the formation of a great Canadian people was going on in Canada. In that process it is the noble privilege, the bounden duty of us all to join. We have a country of boundless fertility, of great rivers and inland seas, of untold mineral resources, a country in which men enjoy the utmost freedom,

"A land where girt by friend or foe,
A man may speak the thing he will;"
and I pray you with as much earnestness as if it were the last word uttered before I went before my God, to worthily perform the duty immediately at your door, to do your part in building up a

young, a free, a great, a prosperous Canadian nation. (Loud and prolonged applause.)

Mr. Edward Murphy proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Davin, and in doing so said that not since he heard his friend the late Mr. D'Arcy Magee in that very hall had he heard anything to equal the speech to which they had just listened. He asked for a vote of thanks to Mr. Davin not only for the speech to which they had just listened, but as an honour to the Irish race. (Cheers.)

Mr. McShane, M.P.E., seconded the vote of thanks, which was carried with enthusiasm.

Mr. Davin in acknowledging it said he had at least as good ground for thanking the audience as they had for thanking him. He had addressed many audiences but never one more intelligent and few so ready to seize with almost instinctive rapidity the point. Not discouraging or unhelpful to a speaker was the presence of so many ladies. He might, looking round those boxes and that hall, parody a well-known verse of Moore—

If hearts that feel and eyes that smile
Are the dearest gifts that heaven supplies,

One never need leave this beautiful isle
For sensitive hearts and for sun-bright eyes.

(Cheers.)



